

DFEC In Motion...

Paving the Way for Federal Managers and Employees With Disabilities

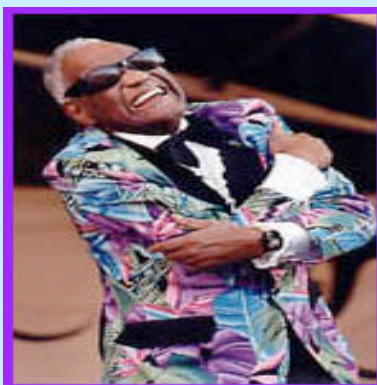




*"By working together to open doors of opportunity for citizens with disabilities, we can help fulfill the promise of our great Nation."
President George W. Bush*

In mid-July of this year, America will mark the 16th anniversary of the Americans With Disability Act (ADA), one of the many great compassionate acts of American government. Since becoming law, the ADA has helped improve the quality of life for more than 50 million Americans with physical and mental disabilities. As a result, it is easier today for people with disabilities to find a job, to enter public buildings, and to live more independently in their communities instead of being separated away from their family and peers. These are all welcome changes in American life. People with disabilities now have more freedom to do productive work and to live independent lives. Federal Agencies are committed to fostering an environment that encourages all associates with disabilities to aspire to their fullest potential. Yes, there are federal laws requiring agencies to provide equal access to electronic and information systems for individuals with disabilities. However, what is very exciting is the fact that it is the will and desire of federal managers. This is a great step toward ensuring persons with disabilities know the American Dream is meant for them.

Many individual citizens and organizations have dedicated themselves to serving the interest of persons with disabilities. The Kansas City Federal Executive Board's Disabled Federal Employee Council (DFEC) is focused on providing advisory services to Federal Managers who are seeking information about providing a productive environment for their disabled employees. The Federal Government, as the largest employer of persons with disabilities, is committed to making sure people get the treatment and support they need so they do not fall through the cracks. There is a new generation of young people with disabilities growing up in America today -- graduating from high school, going to college, and preparing to participate fully in the workplace. They have a right to make the most of their potential, and our Nation must make the most of their intellect, talents, and abilities. By working together to break down barriers for Americans with disabilities, we will keep our economy growing, make a lasting investment in the future of our country, and uphold our fundamental commitment to justice and equality for all Americans.



A Brief Introduction to DFEC

The Mission

The mission of the Disabled Federal Employee's Council (DFEC) is to raise awareness to federal agencies on employment, training, promotion, and cultural issues of federal employees with disabilities.

The Goal

- A. Improve overall management of the DFEC by providing training and guidance to federal agencies and interested parties in the greater Kansas City area.
- B. Establish and maintain an effective communications network among federal agency representatives to the council.
 - 1. Establish an informal channel for exchanging ideas relative to improving employment and advancement opportunities and improve working conditions for disabled persons.
 - 2. Foster awareness and education of available resources between federal agencies in the Greater Kansas City area.
 - 3. Assist federal agencies, when requested.

The Council

DFEC is comprised with a team of customer-focused federal employees and managers who provide assistance to greater Kansas City federal agencies to ensure information resources are accessible to its employees with disabilities. I encourage you to find out more about what the Disabled Federal Employee's Council can do for you and your fellow employees. DFEC is an invaluable resource to help us meet our goal of providing a quality work environment for all employees.

The membership of the DFEC is open to all persons who are appointed by their agency to serve on the council. They truly care about the work they perform and strive to move the Council forward by keeping up to date on changes in technology and accessibility needs of customers.



Federal employees working together in a Federal Agency's Accessibility Laboratory

How Can DFEC Help You?

Portfolio of Services

DFEC's main areas of focus center around providing:

Section 501 Guidance on discrimination
Section 504 Rehabilitation and discrimination
Section 508 Guidance and Technical Assistance
Guidance for Assistive Technology Services
Accessibility Education and Outreach

More specifically, DFEC provides service to the federal agencies by:

1. Providing technical guidance on the provisions of the Section 508 accessibility standard to federal managers and employees.
2. Providing technical guidance on accessibility to owners of current or proposed information technology projects.
3. Providing guidance to federal managers in the determination and acquisition of appropriate assistive technology solutions, including installation, training, and maintenance of the adaptive equipment.
4. Communicating information on DFEC services and accessibility principles.
5. Reaching out and working with to community organizations that provide assistance to persons with disability.



KC Chief and youth typing on Braille machines

Federal Leadership – Leading By Example



“My New Freedom Initiative will help Americans with disabilities by increasing access to assistive technologies, expanding educational opportunities, increasing the ability of Americans with disabilities to integrate into the workforce, and promoting increased access into daily community life.”

**President George W. Bush
New Freedom Initiative
February 1, 2001**

U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii is known for his distinguished record as a legislative leader, and as a World War II combat veteran who lost an arm when he earned the nation's highest award for military valor, the Congressional Medal of Honor. On disability issues, Senator Inouye has supported landmark legislation, including serving as one of the original co-sponsors of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990. This is legislation that guarantees the civil rights of people with disabilities by prohibiting discrimination against anyone who has a mental or physical disability in the areas of employment, public services, transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications.





Did You Know?

Sign Language interpreters are gaining popularity in theatres from Broadway to Walla Walla. With the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, along with increased sensitivity to sign language and the deaf community, theatre producers and venues throughout the country find themselves exploring the opportunity to reach out to a new audience via interpreted performances.



Federal Analyst and her sign language interpreter

Did You Know?

Buildings/Facilities personnel may need to make some considerations for not using a strobe light warning/security system. Strobe lights have the potential of causing additional safety issues for personnel who are very sensitive to strobe lights (e.g. some individuals with epilepsy).



DFEC Recent Program Accomplishments

Have you ever looked up the word, “disability” in a dictionary? Do it and you’ll see what a poor inference is made regarding people who are ABLE and DO many, many things! An estimated 30% of the US populous is disabled and the Bureau of Labor Statistics demonstrates the typical disabled employee is 20% more productive than individuals without a disability performing the same job. Technological accommodations have enabled many disabled persons to be more productive and vibrant members of society in business, public sector and in recreational pursuits.

Since DFEC began, the Council has worked hard to have a positive impact on the lives of our federal managers and employees with disabilities. DFEC offers services to help managers and employees with disabilities successfully perform their jobs and enhance the federal agencies’ ability to meet its compliance requirements under the law.

Some of DFEC’s accomplishments in FY 2003 and FY 2004 included:

1. Updating the DFEC Bylaws to meet current and future demands
2. Members of DFEC attended local, regional, and national disability forums and events focusing on assistive technology for people with disabilities and employment for people with disabilities.
3. DFEC has broadened their exposure to Federal and private sector by completing a document that provides information and resources about DFEC.
4. Participated in various federal agency’s Disability Month programs
5. Developed informative web-based, education package for the FEB website. This soon will provide the federal workforce with more information about DFEC and persons with disabilities.

There is much more we can do to assure that Americans with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect. With enlightenment, or education in mind, DFEC intends on providing more information to the public and Federal sectors regarding DFEC activities. Education is central to development. The Federal Government’s firm commitment to equality through Special emphasis Committees has enabled more and more people with disabilities to continue pursuit of full participation in the American life. DFEC’s primary tool for education will be this Federal Executive Board’s web site. Currently, DFEC members are revising documents to produce them in an electronic media format, including various accessible formats. DFEC is personally committed to seeing the day when our current array of services are no longer needed and all employees have ready access to the information technology and resources necessary for their success.

Kansas City

Federal Executive Board (KC FEB)

<http://kcfeb.gsa.gov>

FEB Executive Director – Cindy Hillman

FEB Secretary – Mary Triay

FEB Clerk – Greg Martinez

816-823-5100

Disabled Federal Employees Council (DFEC)

<http://kcfeb.gsa.gov/DFEC/DFEC.asp>

DFEC Chairperson – Kendall Crosby
US Treasury – Internal Revenue Service
816-823-9743

Co-Chairperson – Jim Jordan
US Dept. of Defense – Defense Finance Accounting
Services
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Secretary –

FEB Diversity Subcommittee

Chairperson – Romell Cooks
2nd ViceChairperson, FEB

816-823-5100

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For the KC FEB Disabled Federal Employees Council



Did You Know?

There are Braille watches!



Did You Know?

Siren detectors, which can be installed in a vehicle, detect high decibel sound waves and alert a driver who is unable to hear approaching emergency vehicles.

Did You Know?

Depression can be considered a disability. It is a physical disorder that alters the body's brain chemicals. Sometimes there may be a triggering event, but it also occurs when there is no apparent trigger. "Adjustment Disorder" happens after a stressful event and usually only lasts from a few months to several months.

Did You Know?

An individual with an illegal drug addiction is NOT covered against employment discrimination under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).